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EXCERPTS OF ADDRESS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SEPTEMBER 18, 1967

First, let me say that I am very pleased that we are commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Central Intelligence Agency. I'm particularly honored today to be included in your program. This Agency is a basic part of the defense and security structure of the Nation. It is as vital to the well-being of the American people and to the common defense of the Republic as the Department of Defense or the Department of State or indeed the combined forces of the Nation. Of all the agencies of Government that have developed professional competence, I know of none which has done a better job than the Central Intelligence Agency. I say that as one who has for several years, both in the United States Senate and now as Vice President, called upon your resource people, your experts, and your research facilities for information and guidance. When you consider that we've had a Central Intelligence Agency for just one generation, for twenty years, it's nothing short of remarkable that we have developed in this Nation the professional competence exemplified by the men and women in this auditorium today and by the Director and his top echelon staff. I salute you for it.

You cannot expect in a free society to be immune from criticism. But remember that if you weren't being criticized you wouldn't be doing anything. The only people who are not criticized are those who are either so silent that they are competing with death itself or those who are doing nothing. But what you're doing is of vital importance. I underscore it: vital importance. I want you to know that we in Government do appreciate this and, what is more, the American people appreciate it. The American people feel better because there is a CIA. The American people know we need the Central Intelligence Agency. Some of our critics may not be so sure but, as Theodore Roosevelt once said, "You can trust the common sense and the good judgment of the majority of the American people over and beyond that of any selected self-appointed minority."

I haven't any particularly prepared remarks for you except to express my appreciation and the appreciation of your President for your service beyond the call of duty. We have gained a much broader knowledge of the world because of you in this great Agency and I believe that the world is a better place for the people of this earth because there has been, is, and will continue to be a Central Intelligence Agency.

We have as prime objectives to make a world of law and order and a world in which there is social justice. I sometimes think Americans forget that their objectives are as individuals as a people

and as a Nation, in the hubbub of everyday life. We ought never to forget such lofty ideals and high objectives. To forget them is to lose the meaning of our daily work. We have stated them many, many times. Despite the fact that our country has been called upon to stand guard at many a rampart, and even now finds its men in battle, I am one of those people -- and I am sure you are -- who can proudly and honestly say that this Nation has done at least as much for the cause of peace, social justice, and freedom in this world as any other Nation throughout the history of civilization. I don't think we ought to walk away from that high honor and that worthy objective just because some people are momentarily critics.

I hope that each of you will continue to do your good work as you have, try to improve the quality of your activities, your research, your findings, your purpose, and your professional life. We all know that we can do better. I know I can and I am sure you feel you can. The story of America is the story of individuals and generations saying they can do better than the day before or the week before. It's the story of a Nation that said it could do the impossible. Many people think that what we're trying to do now is impossible: to maintain our commitments abroad and to try to build the foundation of a better America and a great society at home. I don't think it's impossible at all. Sometimes I weary a bit of those who have such little faith and those who are so fearful. We can do what we need to do; if we can't do it, who do you think can? If we are unable to keep our commitments, who then will keep any commitments? If we are unable to maintain strong national security, who do you think then can afford to? If we, with a gross national product of almost 40 percent of the entire production of the world -- and that's what we had last year, 40 percent of the total gross national product of the world, with less than 6 percent of the population -- if we can't afford to do what needs to be done, who do you think can afford it? So I say, we can do what we need to do. I think that we will overcome our problems by our resourcefulness, by our resources, by our knowledge, by our intelligence put to work, by working with others, and by doing what we know has to be done.

And that's the story of the CIA. You've done what had to be done because you knew it had to be done. You've had some failures. Who hasn't? The story of success is not a continuing dialogue or a serial of daily successes. It has some setbacks but what's important is the score at the end of the game -- or at least from time to time as you take a look at it. I think your score is pretty good. Just don't rest on your laurels. Remember, as old Satchel Paige used to say, "If you look back you might find out somebody's gaining on you." So, look ahead, and you'll be all right!

Thank you, and congratulations.